

West Goshen, PA — Today, Congressman Joe Sestak celebrated Earth Day by helping clean up Goose Creek in West Goshen with about 100 volunteers from the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association.

“As someone who grew up in the Darby Creek watershed in Springfield, I know the value and importance watersheds have on our community,” noted Joe. “That is why I will continue to work with all interested parties to develop a comprehensive watershed review that takes advantage of existing plans to best define the problems we are facing and serve as a comprehensive action for all involved to help implement.”

Since his election to Congress, Congressman Sestak has been addressing the issue of proper watershed management. One of the first things he did was tour our municipalities to see the impacts of the 2004 floods in our region, including what culverts needed repair and what streams and river banks needed restoration, to discern how best to address the problem. Because of these concerns, since the recent election Joe has met with interested parties from conservation groups and Jamie Anderson, watershed specialist for Delaware County Conservation District, to the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a comprehensive watershed review that takes advantage of existing plans to best define the problems we are facing and serve as a comprehensive action for all involved to help implement

He has met with Jeff Featherstone, an expert in flood plain mapping from Temple University, about our outdated mapping; the Army Corps of Engineers about the need to have a comprehensive watershed review and to ask them to survey the district and outline a plan to do so; and almost all of the local watershed groups in the district to review the Corps’ proposal for a comprehensive approach they had developed for Joe as a district-wide watershed management plan including funding requirements. Congressman Sestak will also be meeting with the remainder of the watershed organizations about this issue.

As a result of these meetings, Congressman Sestak will work on three phases to accomplish our watershed goals while also providing for the environmental restoration of our creeks: (1) Have the Army Corps of Engineers conduct a Reconnaissance Study, which would cost about \$250,000 and which the Congressman will seek federal funding for, using existing information to identify the problems, needs and opportunities regarding water resources in the study area. He will also seek out interested, non-Federal entities like the state of Pennsylvania to partner with the Corps for the study (historically, Pennsylvania has not agreed to cost share Feasibility Studies like this one, even though similar agencies of other states frequently participate. Joe is

committed to working with Governor Rendell and district representatives from our state legislature to ensure this partnership happens). (2) Once the non-federal partner is identified, he will work with all interested parties to conduct a Feasibility study with the Army Corps of Engineers, which would consist of detailed data collection and evaluation, formulation of several alternative plans, and a report making specific recommendations to Congress. This process typically cost around \$2-4 million, which is cost-shared between federal and non-federal partners, and could take from 2 to 5 years depending on how soon the money was available. (3) Last, once the Feasibility Study is completed and the resulting report is submitted to Congress, the recommended project can then receive Congressional authorization for construction, which the Congressman will pursue through the Water Resources Development Act.

“What we do today will have a significant impact on our watersheds tomorrow,” added Joe. “If we are going to leave our water purer for our children with environmental restoration of our creeks, we must redouble our efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive plan in which all interested parties and municipalities can participate.”

In Congress, Joe has also been working on additional legislation to protect our environment and address the problem of global warming, including cosponsoring and passing H.R. 6, the CLEAN Energy Act, which rolled back subsidies and tax breaks for Big Oil and which passed on the House floor by a vote of 264 to 163. He is also helping push through legislation which help refocus our efforts on alternative energies, including his cosponsorship of H.R. 550, the Securing America’s Energy Independence Act, which extends the energy tax credit for solar energy property and qualified fuel cell property and the tax credit for residential energy efficient property expenditures.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. □ According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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